

# THE FISHERIES OF GLOUCESTER.

## Retrospective Glance of Their Growth and Development.

### Changes Which Have Been Made in Last Two Centuries.

The following brief and interesting retrospective glance at the fisheries of Cape Ann, as far forth as the disposition of the catch and by-products, from the pen of Hon. Sylvanus Smith will, we know, be found of interest by the thousands of readers of the Times.

Capt. Smith, who is an authority on Cape Ann fishery matters, writes as follows:

It may be of interest to many to know what manner has been taken in the past, and is being taken now, in the disposition of our fish and fish products, and in writing of the fisheries, I will include the whole of Cape Ann.

In the early settlement of Gloucester, the fishing was carried on mostly in small boats, and the crew fished with hook and line. During this time, fishing was the principal business of the Massachusetts Bay colony, and fish was about the only thing the people, at that time had to export, to pay for imports of the Mother Country. So it may be seen that it was a very important factor in the settlement of this colony, and the fisheries were really considered of so much importance, to this Massachusetts Bay colony, that a representation of a codfish was placed in the "old colony building," as a symbol of the principal business of the people, and even today, the codfish still hangs in the new rooms of the present state house.

The case of the Virginia colony was a different proposition, as they had their tobacco to pay for the articles which were imported to them.

In these early days, codfish

#### Was Considered a Legal Tender for the Payment of Debts,

or the exchange in trade, but these colonists were not allowed to trade with any foreign nation, as the British navigation laws did not permit it, but we could trade with other British colonies along the Atlantic seaboard, although, at times, some vessels would clear for some southern port, and go with their cargoes to some foreign island, and when they returned, the custom officials would be blind to the transaction.

After some time, the war of Independence gave us the right to trade where we wished. This gave new impulse to our business, which was increased largely. Many towns and villages all along the coast, from Newport, R. I., to Eastport, Maine, entered into it, and the larger vessels carried their cargoes to Portugal and many other foreign countries. Later, when we acquired Louisiana, and the adjoining territory, more trade was opened up via the Mississippi river and our fish was carried to many points in that section. At that time, this was the only way we could reach the West with our products.

There was a bounty given to the fishermen, amounting to \$4 per ton for the vessels engaged in the cod fisheries; this amount was divided between the owners and the crews. This was in recognition of their services in the navy, and as privateersmen, and to encourage the fisheries as a nursery for seamen, but this was given up in 1867.

#### Erie Canal and Building of Railroads Extended Markets.

Later, in 1829, the completion of the Erie canal gave us another outlet for our fish. Then New York became the great distributing point for fish. At that time, we had a large number of vessels carrying fish to that place, as well as some to the Boston trade. The advent of railroads made another great change in the distribution of our products. Then Boston could reach the west with our fish by rail. At that time several large firms were engaged in shipping fish to the west as well as to foreign countries.

About 1865, George Perkins made the first direct shipment of fish from Gloucester, by shipping 25 450 pound boxes to Albany to sell, and did sell them successfully. This was the beginning of Gloucester's direct trade with New England and the West.

At this time, the fish were packed in boxes or bundles, and shipped whole, that is, split and salted. At the present time, there are a few shipped in this manner, and in speaking of fish, it is meant the various kinds of salt and dried fish.

#### Beginning of the Boneless Fish Industry.

Probably the first fish to be skinned and cut for market, was by George H. Smith in about 1872. This he did in a small way, by packing them in small boxes which he got from the confectionery stores.

There has not been a cargo of dry cured fish shipped from Gloucester to New York since 1884, and very few to Boston. The fish at this time are practically all put up in boneless packages. In this branch of the business, a large number of men, boys and girls are employed in the preparing of these goods for market. The fish are put up in neat and attractive packages, and it is a great improvement on the old time methods.

#### The Halibut Fishery.

Halibut were very plentiful on our fishing grounds along our shore, and also on Georges bank, so much so, that they were a bother to the fishermen. During the '40's there was a company formed by the fishing firms to buy and ship this kind of goods, paying a stated price for the fish at different dates. So large was the quantity brought in, the company had to disband, and a number of vessels were obliged to take their cargoes outside the point, and dump them overboard.

Somewhere about this time, Moses Lufkin and Henry Merchant tried the experiment of smoking halibut, which was successful, although the market was very limited, as it was something new. Since that time, this market has developed to a great extent.

#### Mackerel Were First Taken by Drailing or Trolling.

The mackerel fishery in the early years was not pursued to any great extent. The first method in taking the mackerel was by drailing or trolling (in the same manner as they now catch bluefish). Lines were thrown out over the stern of the boats which were under sail, and some fish were caught in this way. Sometimes it was noticed that mackerel would swim along the side of the boat, while the crew were dressing fish. It was a common practice to take porgies or other fish which had become soft, and pound them on the rail, to break into small pieces. This would often cause the fish to appear. There was a story told about this time that mackerel had become so used to this noise and bait being thrown over during the pounding, that any time they could be attracted by making a similar noise, even without the bait.

Then the mackerel fishery was pursued with hook and line, and this method of fishing became very successful; about this time, the bait mill was invented, to grind the bait (menhaden and clams) and a large quantity was used by scattering it on the water, while the vessel was drifting.

When the purse seine was invented, about 1850, by Gorham Babson of Rockport, it was the beginning of the end of that branch of business, and at the present time, that kind of fishing (catching mackerel by hook and line) has been destroyed. This was very unfortunate, as the mackerel fishery was the most profitable part of the business.

#### How the Waste Has Been Utilized in By-Products.

The by-products of the fisheries, such as oil, hake sounds, fish-skins, etc., have been utilized at different times. Fish oil was used quite early by the tanners of leather, and sometimes for illuminating purposes. The hake sounds were used about 1822 by a Mr. Hall, who came to Sandy Bay. After experimenting with them, a patent for isinglass was granted, and it was used by the brewers in settling beer, and also for sizing, etc. This branch has grown to large proportions and this

kind of stock is imported from Norway and even India and many other countries.

When the skinning of fish became a business, there was much residue. First it was given to parties to haul away for fertilizer use. Isaac Stanwood experimented with cod and cusk skins to extract the glue. He was a poor man, and tried to interest others without success, and while sick in the hospital, the process was patented by someone else; then he lost the right of discovery.

At the present time, the refuse, after the glue is extracted, is manufactured into a fertilizer, so it may be seen that Mr. Stanwood's efforts with a tin dipper, simmering on the stove, has developed into a large business, in which a number of factories are engaged, among which is the Russia Cement Co., which has several large branches, and employs a large force of help, the fish glue being packed in barrels, bottles and tubes, and shipped to all parts of the world.

#### The Old-time Hook and Line Mackerel Fleet.

Between the 50's and 60's, the greatest number of vessels were employed, when a very large fleet was engaged in the cod and mackerel fisheries, and it was a sight never to be forgotten, when the fleet of mackerel fishermen were off the Cape in the fall of the year. Several hundred sail of vessels would

be jogging at night, with their lights up, and would appear like some great city out to sea. When they came to Gloucester, during an easterly storm, they would sometimes fill the entire harbor from Five Pound Island to Eastern Point.

The purse seine came into use and the mackerel fishery was destroyed. That great fleet has gone. Some of the towns which were engaged in the fishing business have gone into other lines. Many have become summer resorts, while in some of them, nothing remains but old tumble down wharves, and the warehouses have long since disappeared. Some of the harbors are only visited in summer by yachts for shelter. Nothing remains of that once great fishing business, which was carried on in these places.

So from that small beginning which was started so long ago, there has developed the business of today. Fish, cured and shipped as they were 50 years ago, would not sell now; much of it was really unfit for food, being dirty and strong. Now, we are continually striving for more cleanly methods, and pack the goods in the most attractive packages, but I can see a menace to our cod fishery, in the form of otter trawling, which, if pursued to any great extent, will destroy the ground fishing, as the purse seine destroyed the mackerel menhaden fisheries along our coast.

SYLVANUS SMITH.

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#### Canadian Lobster Fisheries Regulations.

A Canadian Order-in-Council has been passed declaring that all lobster traps constructed after the 31st December, 1910, shall have the laths on all portions thereof not less than 1 1-4 inches apart, and this space must remain clear, and nothing shall be done to diminish the size of the mesh, and no one shall fish for lobsters with traps made after the said date, which are not constructed in accordance with these requirements; but all lobster traps constructed before the said date may be used for the catching of lobsters without being remodelled to meet these requirements until the 31st December, 1912; after which date no one shall fish for lobsters with traps which are not constructed in accordance with the requirements first above described in this sub-section.

The burden of proof that any lobster traps used from the 1st January, 1911, to the 31st December, 1912, that has not clear space between the laths of 1 1-4 inches and any netting that may be used in thereof less than three inches extension measurement was constructed before the 31st December, 1910, shall lie on the person using such trap.



# THE DUTY ON SCH. BLANCHE'S SAIL.

## Some Press Comments in Connection With the Hague Decision.

The refusal of the customs authorities at Bay of Islands, N. F., to allow the delivery of a foresail to sch. Blanche of this port, to replace one lost on the passage down by stress of weather, without payment of customs duties, is attracting some attention, in view of the fact that The Hague tribunal recommended a commission to consider the points of variance between the American fishermen and the Newfoundland authorities.

Among the press comments on the affair are the following:

### A Working Fisheries Treaty.

The fresh discord with Newfoundland over the fisheries is not as discouraging as it sounds, nor as important. Magnified or misrepresented, the circumstances of this renewed dispute might be made to discredit the thoroughness of The Hague Tribunal, whereas the incident merely tests the work of that body. In the final form of the treaty the tribunal sustained the contention of Great Britain that Newfoundland should have the right to make "local regulations," but stipulated that these should not be "unreasonable." The decision as to whether they were to be regarded as reasonable was to rest with a commission of three: Dr. Hock of the Netherlands, Dr. Hugh Smith of Washington and a third to be appointed by Great Britain. An example of the sort of thing which has been vexing American fishermen is the practice of the Newfoundland government to charge duty on a deckload of Yankee barrels taken down to receive frozen herring. These barrels, though they never left the vessels from the time she sailed until she returned to Gloucester, were dutiable at 25 cents apiece—a cool \$25 for the Newfoundlanders on a deckload of a hundred. This autumn the American fish-

ermen expected to be relieved of such annoyances; but they were disappointed. The suit of sails sent out to the schooner "Blanche" to replace those blown away, and taxed by the Newfoundland government, furnishes the occasion for a test case of the "reasonableness" of local regulations. If the matter follows its due course, the commissioners will be asked to decide whether it is reasonable for an American schooner receiving American sails transported in another American vessel, for a voyage homeward, to be charged duty on its canvas. It is probably the first of a series of cases to establish usage under the new treaty regulations, and so far from proving the treaty ineffectual, this episode begins to put that agreement to work.

### Newfoundland Pin Prick.

Hardly were we done rejoicing at the settlement of our century-long fisheries dispute with the British provinces, when Newfoundland gives our fishermen a new cause of embarrassment. The customs authorities of that province insist that a fisherman shall pay duty on new sails forwarded after the loss of canvas in a gale. No doubt this annoying difficulty can be adjusted through appeal to the agency especially provided by the recent award of the Hague tribunal, and the incident is less significant in connection with the fisheries as an illustration of the annoying pin pricks which two such neighboring peoples as ourselves and the British provinces inflict upon each other because of an unreasonable jealous tariff policy. What Newfoundland gains by insistence upon her right to tax the new sails of a distressed American fisherman is trivial; what she loses in mutual good will and smooth international relations may in the long run turn out a considerable matter. The hopeful symptom of the incident is its accentuation of the need of reciprocity between neighbors.—Boston Herald.

Sch. A. C. Newhall, 5000 haddock.  
Sch. Mary Edith, 3500 haddock, 4000 cod, 3000 hake.  
Sch. Rose Standish, 800 haddock, 1700 cod.  
Sch. J. F. McMorrow, 3000 cod.  
Sch. Marguerite, 7000 pollock.  
Sch. Marguerite Haskins, 4000 pollock.  
Sch. Richard J. Nunan, 8000 haddock, 1500 cod, 3000 pollock.  
Sch. Nettie, 1000 cod.  
Sch. Mary B. Greer, 4000 haddock, 600 cod, 1500 pollock.  
Sch. Manomet, 7000 haddock, 700 cod, 3000 hake.  
Sch. Metamora, 13,000 haddock, 6000 cod, 3000 hake, 5000 cusk.  
Sch. Rex, 30,000 haddock, 10,000 cod, 12,000 hake.  
Haddock, \$3.10 to \$3.80 per cwt.; large cod, \$3.50; market cod, \$2.50; hake, \$2.10 to \$3.75; pollock, \$2.

### TRANSFERRED TO SANDWICH.

#### U. S. Fishing Steamer Phalarope Has Been Landing Eggs at Portsmouth.

The United States fish commission steamer Phalarope, which has been making Plymouth her port for the past half dozen years, or since she has been engaged in collecting codfish eggs spawn from the fleet of fishing vessels in Cape Cod bay, has been ordered to make her new port of entry at Sandwich.

"The new harbor makes the best place for us to run into along the coast," said one of the men of the steamer. It is handy to the fishing grounds, where the codfish are found in large numbers, and we are always sure that we can get safely into port, no matter how suddenly the weather might change.

The Phalarope is connected with the United States fish hatchery station at Woods Hole, and every year follows the fleet of codfishermen, the boats that catch the fish in nets, along the shores of Cape Cod in quest of the cod eggs.

Capt. Veeder and his crew of the Phalarope, all skilled in the art of stripping the egg-bearing fish, leave port every morning, weather permitting, in the wake of the fleet of fishing vessels that tie up in the harbor at Sandwich and remain on the fishing grounds chasing the fleet about until night comes on or they are forced to run into port on account of bad weather. The work of collecting the cod eggs is always arduous. The hardy codfishermen stay out on the fishing grounds no matter if the sea does get lumpy, and as they remain often until it becomes a fearful battle for them to get back to port it can be readily seen that the men of the Phalarope have no easy task braving the elements in the performance of their work.

Here and there about the bay, and often wide off the coast, the trim little steamer gives chase to the haughty little fishing vessels (some of them could be carried on the deck of the steamer), with men from the steamer aboard stripping the cod as rapidly as they are caught.

Great skill has to be exercised in handling the egg-bearing cod, all of them being alive and floundering about as they are taken out of the seines. As soon as the eggs are obtained they are placed in big cans, in water of the same temperature as that of the waters of the bay where they are caught. When the day's work is over the cans are transferred to the Phalarope, where they are made ready for immediate shipment to the hatchery at Woods Hole.

The new station of the Phalarope has many advantages over any other that she has had since engaged in the work and will greatly facilitate the work of the commission in this branch of the important work that they are carrying on at Woods Hole hatchery.

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#### Big Fish Cargo.

The bark Cordelia, Capt. Gale, which sailed Friday from St. John's N. F., for Bahia, took one of the largest fish cargoes that ever left that port in a sailing vessel. The cargo comprises 8,885 drums and 4,448 half drums, containing 10,160 quintals of fish, valued at in the vicinity of \$80,000.

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#### Fishermen Spoken.

Capt. Geoffery Thomas of sch. Cynthia reports speaking schs. Elsie and Ingomar off Isaacs Harbor, N. S., a few days ago.

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#### Good Haddocking Stocks.

Sch. Conqueror, Capt. Robertson Giffin, stocked \$2818 net, as the result of her recent haddock trip at T wharf, the crew sharing \$67 clear.

The crew of sch. Cynthia, Capt. Geoffery Thomas, shared \$76 on her haddock trip landed at Boston yesterday and the crew of sch. Slade Gordon, Capt. George E. Heckman, shared \$42 on their trip.

Sch. Cynthia, Capt. Geoffery Thomas stocked \$240.15 as the result of her recent haddocking trip, the crew sharing \$62.60 clear.

#### The Herring Outlook.

Information has been received at St. John's, N. F., that herring is very plentiful in and around the vicinity of Sound Island, Placentia Bay. In fact they are so numerous that the residents there have more now netted than they can attend to.

At Portugal Cove herring is now reported to be fairly plentiful and of a very large size. During the last few days large schools of the fish struck in and some of the residents in that neighborhood have done very well.

#### Salmon at Bay Bulls, N. F.

About Bay Bulls, N. F., and vicinity, salmon are reported plentiful, and the few fishermen who put nets out have been rewarded for their trouble. Catching salmon at this season is a paying business, as the fish can be easily disposed of for 20 cents a pound. A few years ago, the fishermen in the center mentioned, made several big catches with the result that in some instances a net owner cleared as much as \$20 a day.

#### Codfish Imports at New York.

During November, codfish to the value of \$25,228 was imported at New York, chiefly from Canada and Newfoundland. Herring imports were valued at \$131,677, and mackerel, \$87,053. Of the latter, Norway sent \$65,968 worth; England, \$9,393; Scotland, \$3,083; Ireland, \$2,282, and Canada, \$3,477.

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## PRICES DROP AT T WHARF.

### CODFISH SCHOOL OFF NEW JERSEY NOW SUPPLYING NEW YORK MARKET.

Prices are sagging a bit at T wharf today. Haddock hold up above \$3 but are off considerable from Wednesday's figures. Codfish are low, this being caused not because of any liberal receipt of these fish at the dock, but because the codfish school which makes an annual visit to New Jersey shore is now running there, and the vessels out that way are filling the New York market daily with live stock and at lower prices than have ruled here. Pollock hold at \$3 and hake are going at \$2.10 and \$3.75.

Of the 18 shore trips at the wharf, most of them are small, sch. Ida S. Brooks with 17,000 pounds having the most fish of the bunch. Four of the off-shore fleet are also in with catches ranging from 27,000 to 54,000 pounds, sch. Benjamin F. Phillips having the latter amount.

Sch. Stiletto hails for 41,000, sch. Rex for 52,000 and sch. Metamora for 27,000 pounds.

#### Boston Arrivals.

The fares and prices in detail are:  
Sch. Motor, 3000 haddock, 600 cod, 600 hake.

Sch. Harriet, 4000 haddock, 1500 cod, 2000 hake.

Sch. Winnifred, 3000 pollock.

Sch. Benj. F. Phillips, 50,000 haddock, 4000 cod.

Sch. Stiletto, 39,000 haddock, 2000 cod.

Sch. Ida S. Brooks, 9000 haddock, 6000 cod, 1500 hake.

Sch. Frances P. Mesquita, 5000 haddock, 700 cod.

Sch. Evelyn L. Thompson, 2000 haddock, 700 cod, 1000 pollock.

Sch. Mary E. Silveria, 4000 haddock, 600 cod, 3000 pollock.

Sch. Priscilla, 3000 haddock.



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## SECOND FROZEN HERRING FARE.

SCH. HARRY A. NICKERSON ARRIVED FROM BONNE BAY YESTERDAY AFTERNOON.

There are no arrivals here this morning. Yesterday afternoon sch. Harry A. Nickerson arrived from Bonne Bay, N. F., with a cargo of frozen herring, the second frozen fare to arrive here thus far this season.

Some of the market boats are in this morning, but the most of them are out on the fishing ground.

The little steam netters have been picking up a few fish lately and getting quite a lot of cod and haddock among them, sometimes the fares being one half or one quarter these fish and the rest pollock. During the early part of the season they got all pollock but now are striking market fish.

This forenoon sch. Annie F. Kimball arrived from Northeast Harbor, Me., with a cargo of cured fish.

Some of the vessels of the pollock fleet will soon change over from hook and lines to seines and continue after pollock. A school or two has been reported off here already. Last year the first seine trip came in February 3, but the fish had been schooling off here for three weeks before that. The large fleet which engaged in this fishery last winter and spring did unusually well and brought in big trips.

### Today's Arrivals and Receipts.

The arrivals and fares in detail are:

Sch. Harry A. Nickerson, Bonne Bay, N. F., 1000 bbls. frozen herring, 70 bbls. salt herring.

Sch. Annie F. Kimball, Northeast Harbor, Me., 900 qtls. cured fish.

Steamer Quoddy, shore, 5000 lbs. fresh fish.

Steamer Nomad, shore, 3500 lbs. fresh fish.

Steamer Mindora, shore, 3500 lbs. fresh fish.

Steamer Hope, shore, 2500 lbs. fresh fish.

Steamer Weazel, shore, 1200 lbs. fresh fish.

Sch. Thomas Brundage, shore.

Sch. Rita A. Viator, shore.

Sch. Emily Sears, shore.

Sch. Mary DeCosta, shore.

Sch. Walter P. Goulart, shore.

Sch. Clara G. Silva, shore.

Sch. Georgianna, shore.

Sch. Viking, shore.

Sch. Belbina P. Domingoes, shore.

Sch. Mettacommet, shore.

### Vessels Sailed.

Sch. Morning Star, haddocking.

### Today's Fish Market.

Bay of Islands salt herring, \$4.12 1-2 per bbl., Bonne Bay salt herring, \$3.62 1/2 per bbl., pickled herring \$5 per bbl.

Eastern deck handline salt cod, \$5.55 per cwt.; for large \$5 for mediums and \$5 for snappers.

Bank halibut 12 cts. per lb. for white, 11 cts. for gray, with the heads on.

Salt cusk, large, \$2.50 per cwt.; medium, \$2.

Salt haddock, \$2 per cwt.

Salt hake, \$2 per cwt.

Salt pollock, \$2 per cwt.

Splitting prices for fresh fish:

Codfish, large, \$2.50 per cwt.; medium, \$1.80; snappers, 80c.

Cusk, large, \$1.75 per cwt.; medium \$1.30; snappers, 50c.

Haddock, \$1.10 per cwt.; hake, \$1.30 per cwt.; dressed pollock \$1.30 per cwt.; round pollock, \$1.20 per cwt.

Georges handline salt cod, \$5.55 for large and \$5.50 for medium.

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### MAINE'S LOBSTER CATCH.

Total of 19,936,542 in 1910, Nearly Double That of Five Years Ago.

The fishermen of Maine caught 19,936,542 lobsters during the year 1910 for which they were paid \$2,145,204, according to Commissioner James L. Donohue. The catch is 3,000,000 more than the previous year and nearly twice as many as in 1905, when the catch was 11,000,000.

The steady increase in the lobster catch in the past five years is attributed by the commissioner to the present method of propagating employed by the state and the better enforcement of the short lobster law.

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## BOSTON FISH PRICES SAG.

EFFECT OF HALF-DOZEN GOOD SIZED OFF-SHORE TRIPS AT T WHARF.

Under the weight of a half-dozen off-shore trips, some of them of large size, the haddock prices sagged off today, the last of the off-shore fleet in selling for \$2.50, while most of them sold right through for \$2.65. The price cannot be called low, still it appears so when considered in connection with the big market which has hitherto prevailed all the season.

The off-shore vessels in are schs. Harmony, Francis J. O'Hara, Jr., Onato, Rhodora, George Parker and Lucania and their fares run all the way from 31,000 to 83,000 pounds, the Lucania having the latter amount.

Capt. Wallace Bruce, who is in command of the Lucania is keeping up the fine work he did in the same craft last winter and in the Arabia this season.

The market boat trips average up well, there being several good ones, schs. Gladys and Nellie, Victor and Ethan, Ethel B. Penney, Matthew S. Greer, Yankee and Stranger having 10,000 pounds or over.

Shore haddock brought as high as \$3.50 and large cod sold at the same figure. Pollock held at \$3 and hake \$3 to \$5, while 200 pounds of halibut which sch. Onato brought in sold for 30 cents per pound.

### Boston Arrivals.

Sch. Harmony, 60,000 haddock, 3000 cod.

Sch. Stranger, 6500 haddock, 1200 cod, 1500 hake, 500 pollock.

Sch. Francis J. O'Hara, Jr., 50,000 haddock, 2000 cod.

Sch. Gladys and Nellie, 7000 haddock, 4500 cod, 2500 hake.

Sch. Matthew S. Greer, 6000 haddock, 3000 cod, 3000 hake.

Sch. Galatea, 2700 haddock, 700 cod, 1500 pollock.

Sch. Rebecca, 4500 haddock, 500 cod, 1000 pollock.

Sch. Victor and Ethan, 12,000 haddock, 600 cod.

Sch. Maud F. Silva, 3000 haddock, 200 cod, 2000 hake.

Sch. Marguerite, 2800 cod.

Sch. Ethel B. Penney, 2500 haddock, 6000 cod, 2500 hake, 2000 cusk.

Sch. Yankee, 3500 haddock, 2500 hake.

Sch. Annie and Jennie, 3000 haddock, 3000 cod, 1000 pollock.

Sch. Leo, 3000 haddock, 1000 cod.

Sch. Emily Cooney, 9000 haddock, 1000 cod.

Sch. Onato, 60,000 haddock, 5000 cod, 200 halibut.

Sch. Lucania, 80,000 haddock, 3000 cod.

Sch. Rhodora, 21,000 haddock, 6200 cod, 500 hake, 3500 cusk.

Sch. George Parker, 40,000 haddock, 2200 cod.

Haddock, \$2.50 to \$3.50 per cwt.; large cod, \$3.50; market cod, \$2.30; pollock, \$3; hake, \$3 to \$5; halibut, 30c per lb.

### Japanese Herring Catch Decreasing.

The herring catch of Hokkaido, Japan, is gradually decreasing, and as 40,000 families in the island are engaged, directly or indirectly, in the fisheries, this decrease is a matter of much concern. One of the reasons given for the decline is the denudation of forests; the removal of trees from large areas results in changing the currents of the rivers, and thus interfering with the propagation of herring. Another reason for the decline is said to be changes in the ocean currents, thus carrying the fish away from the coast of Hokkaido. While the above reasons are put forward by government officials, there are others concerned in the fishing trade who believe artificial propagation, as practiced on the Pacific coast of North America, will have to be resorted to in order to retain Hokkaido's percentage of Japan's extensive fisheries business.

### Pacific Codfishing Season Closed.

The codfish arrivals, both at San Francisco and on Puget Sound, are now complete for the year, all the regular fleet of the fishing firms, except sch. John D. Spreckels of the Alaska Codfish Company, which will winter at the stations, being now in port. There has been only one arrival during the month, the movements of the Alaska Codfish Company fleet being completed at the end of October. The total arrivals at San Francisco for the season are 1,520,600 codfish, of which 580,000 were received by the Alaska

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Codfish Company and 940,600 by the Union Fish Company, including 460,000 which came via Seattle. The total arrivals in Puget Sound are 442,000 pounds, not counting the cargoes diverted to San Francisco. Aside from continued firmness, due to the shortage in the east, this market shows very little feature.

### Sailed 80,000 Miles in 16 Years.

The little two-masted schooner Hattie Loring, which has the remarkable record of having covered 80,000 miles of water in the 16 years she has been built, was sold Wednesday by her owner, Capt. Loring E. Rice, to A. W. Porter of Digby, and she will hereafter fly the British flag. Outside of one trip to Boston, the Loring has been wholly engaged in the packet business between Portland and Washington county ports.

### London Sealskin Sales.

Reports from the sealskin sale held in London recently, say that the 14,000 skins offered by the United States government netted \$450,000 in cash. This is the first year that Uncle Sam has done his own sealing in the Pribyloff Islands, and he is quite well satisfied with the results. Not only does the government expect to profit, but the herds will be conserved.

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### ALASKA HALIBUT FISHERY.

Whales Bothering the Herring Catchers in Search for Bait.

The New York Fishing Gazette publishes the following interesting Alaska halibut fishery notes:

Halibut, which about this time of the year is obtained in 25 or 30 fathoms of water, can now only be had in 90 or 100 fathoms. Fishermen state that they have gone into deeper water because of the fact that the salmon, which of late years have been fairly plentiful near the creeks, have all gone up the creeks to spawn and die.

The Indians, who during the past have been "dead ones," so far as halibut fishing is concerned, have "hove to" and are now outfitting. They are highly successful in salmon fishing, and should they prove so lucky in halibut fishing, they will fish that part of the grounds, that can be fished in small boats, pretty closely.

It is probable that a full supply of herring bait will be obtained from the baiters at the Wrangell Narrows shipping points for some time to come.

The Alexander & Creed Co. of Petersburg, who were denied the right to produce herring by traps, have placed their large and powerful gasoline boat in commission, and are now in a position to supply large or small amounts of halibut bait. To this company is given credit for relieving the situation.

The southwest Alaska fishermen don't care what the meat trust charges for beef; in fact they have got the meat trust "by the hair," with a down-the-mountain pull. Deer, which is as plentiful as ever, can now be obtained in almost any part of the halibut fishing country, and every boat that has a gun has a deer strapped to the rigging.

Capt. Crockett, of the halibut steamer Grant, on his arrival at Wrangell Narrows on his last northbound trip, sized up the bait situation at a glance. No bait was available, and the captain made haste to inform all the baiters that he would tow them and their outfits to any old bay when there was herring. The baiters "hooked" on to the Grant, and Capt. Crockett turned them loose at a bay some miles north of the Narrows. At this place the baiters got a full supply of bait for the Grant; and after the genial captain had received the same he handed the baiters their "dough" and sailed away. Judging by the time he obtained his cargo, the captain must have put his fishermen out to fish at grounds where halibut were as plentiful as pretty girls at a Cape Cod camp meeting.

Whales, which appear to be more numerous than ever in Frederick Sound, are making salmon trolling and herring fishermen is pursuing up the times. The whales, who travel in schools of six or eight, are working overtime in bays where the herring and King salmon are the most plentiful. Just about the time the salmon are commencing to bite, and when the herring fisherman is pursuing up the seines up "pops" the whales and drives all the herring out of the bay. The trollers and baiters state that the whales follow the beaches very closely, and when they come up they are dangerously near their boats.